

MEETING MINUTES

2nd Quarterly Personal Property Pilot Contractors' Meeting
Ft Belvoir Community Center
Thursday, September 23, 1999 - 9:00AM

Ms. Phyllis Broz opened the meeting and stated that the meeting was held in conjunction with the Military Industry Symposium at the request of the contractors and representatives from AMSA, HHGFAA, and MMC were also invited. She then introduced the MTMC reengineering personnel that were present. All others present were given the opportunity to introduce themselves.

Ms. Broz encouraged discussions on each subject as presented and changes to the agenda were provided at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Broz discussed the "due-outs" from the 1st meeting (5/24/99) and the following information was provided:

Request: Contractor requested that the shipment volume by channel be published monthly on the web.

Decision: The cumulative shipment volumes by channel will be posted on the web monthly starting 01 Oct 99.

Request: Contractor wanted to know if the allocation of traffic to large and small business was running as expected.

Decision: We will begin posting small business issues on the web.

Request: Contractor wanted to know if PTOPS could provide some provision for contractors to enter comments.

Decision: New software will be delivered at the end of Oct 99, that will give contractors the ability to enter remarks or comments.

NEW BUSINESS:

Question to Phyllis Broz: What is the length of the pilot program?

Answer: We have the initial year with 2 option years. You will be advised 60 days prior, around mid-November, if option will be exercised.

Question: Small business set-asides – where is this information?

Answer: There are 17 set-aside channels. We will post the specific set-aside channels on the web.

There was a concern that the contractors needed MTMC to listen regarding issues they may have. Phyllis Broz addressed this with a statement that we have been and will continue to work with the contractors throughout this program. She provided some examples of implemented changes to the program as a result of the industry recommendations:

- (1) Contractor and PPSO modules were updated to add a flag on the menu screen that indicates number waiting on pre-move survey, number waiting to be offered, etc so contractors and PPSO's would see immediately what shipments needed action
- (2) Changed PTOPS to automatically authorize an ODC for the air charge whenever SFR Air is ordered so the contractor did not need to request it.
- (3) Made a change to spread dates, but cancelled it following input from the contractors.
- (4) Changed reporting on performance standards from quarterly to monthly to better evaluate contractors to determine "best value".

Question: What about the longevity of PTOPS?

Answer: It continues as long as the pilot continues.

MTMC Pilot Status/Government Issues:

- Charts showing the pilot program statistics were presented.
- Claims report issues were presented.

Information for claims is not being provided in a timely manner. Also, incorrect dates are being found (i.e. 15 Aug – 15 Sep instead of 1-31 Aug) and contractors are failing to submit a negative report as required. Failing to submit these reports in a timely manner, is a contract violation. The reports are due NLT the 15th of the month for all settled claims from the previous month, to include negative reports where applicable.

Question: Why not print the claims information from PTOPS?

Answer: Per SRA, this is a security issue. Parsifal is not allowed to go into the contractor module and they currently do not have the capability to electronically transfer claims report data from PTOPS.

3. Billing issues were presented:

Ms. Locklear addressed the issue of contractors billing for unnecessary or unauthorized charges, i.e., crating, and bunker fuel. There was a question regarding the crating that was part of the unnecessary/unauthorized additional service and Ann Peterson explained that the wording should have been *excessive crating*.

On a positive note, Ms. Locklear praised the contractors for utilizing the performance information provided to them monthly by MTMC to identify operational weaknesses in order to take corrective action. However, she also addressed the fact that many contractors are not meeting performance standards for customer satisfaction.

Question: Will MTMC give the contractors a range of performance scores? Why can't everyone's scores be published?

Answer: We believe this is similar to prices or CDC information, which is not published. Shipments are being awarded based on "best value".

Question: Which mileage guide are you using?

Answer: We are required to use the HHG Carriers' Bureau Mileage Guide.

Also, at this point, Ms. Broz took a show of hands as to whether or not the contractors would like to see all of the performance scores with no name associated with them and all contractors raised their hands.

Contractor Observation: GSA lists all carriers and provides this type of scoring information with no problem. Cannot understand why MTMC can't do the same.

Contractor Request: Would like to know how many surveys were used when evaluating the 3 leading contractors? Are they performing a majority of the moves or are they performing 1 or 2 moves and I am performing 50 moves, therefore my scores look worse than the contractors that are moving 1 or 2 shipments?

Answer: Because all contractors are not on all channels, there will never be equal numbers when doing these evaluations. Ms. Broz stated we would look into releasing the number of surveys for the contractors who met or exceeded the standards.

Question: Can MTMC provide the method being used to acquire these performance scores?

Answer: We are using the survey information provided by Parsifal from members that have received their household goods shipment.

Contractor suggestion: It is important to know specifically, where they are not doing well. Bases (PPSO) should be able to provide this information to the contractor. Channel measurement is important and contractors would like MTMC to considered showing this.

Question: Can MTMC provide performance scoring from individual bases? Can you be specific with information being provided?

Answer: We are not gathering information at installation level. Performance data will continue to be at contract level.

Individual survey information is being provided to the contractor. The PPSO cannot provide any additional information regarding your scoring.

Question: What is on the screen PPSOs look at when allocating shipments?

Answer: They see all the performance scores on the screen and award based on issues that are important to their customers– i.e., customer satisfaction, on time pick-up, on time delivery, etc. Round robin rotation is being used in the system, however, PPSO's award on "best value". The process for using the round robin system for selection of contractors will be placed on the Web.

Question: Is PWC looking at the selection criteria used by the PPSO's?

Answer: PWC is evaluating the entire pilot program, not analyzing PTOPS.

Question: Is TRANSCOM looking at the selection criteria?

Answer: TRANSCOM has not yet completed their evaluation standards. The DOD IG representative added that TRANSCOM has also been tasked to look at the overall process.

Kevin Stevens at SRA discussed the PTOPS connection issues and explained that MTMC is still working on upgrading of the system at this time.

Question: On the days that the contractors are unable to access PTOPS, can the PPSOs access PTOPS and issue task orders?

Answer: It depends on the reason the contractors cannot access PTOPS on that particular day. There are times when a contractor may be having problems only at their end. If this is the case, then of course everyone else can continue to access PTOPS and it is business as usual. However, it could be that the problem lies with the server at HQMTMC and if this is the case, no one can access PTOPS and task orders can not be issued.

MTMC has asked SRA to remove all system-generated violations that occurred on the days that PTOPS was down.

At this point the meeting got back on schedule and we continued discussing “Billing Issues”.

Entering delivery information is another area of concern. Once the shipment is in a delivered status, the contractor cannot enter any more data.

Should the contractor need assistance with entering data in the system, he should contact the PPSO and/or the PTOPS hotline.

Unauthorized additional services are an issue that continues to be a problem. There is a need to check closer when requesting these services, to be sure they are included in the contract. Once again, we suggest you stay in contact with the PPSO regarding these requests.

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of destination contact information being entered in the system by the contractor. Without this information, it is very difficult for Parsifal to perform a required survey. Destination contact information is probably the very last thing that the contractor has and can be input at the same time that the shipment is closed in the system.

Task Orders – as you know, the service member or his designated agent, must sign these documents. Many contractors are letting someone other than the service member sign the task order and this is presenting a big problem when going through audit. The contractor cannot get paid until Parsifal verifies delivery of the shipment with the service member. Contractors should remind their drivers that only the service member or his designated agent may sign off on this document.

Industry Issues:

Ms. Jack addressed all questions submitted by industry regarding Business Rules/PPSO Issues and General Issues.

She stated that we wanted to be clear on terminology – first, that the contracting officer is at HQMTMC. Second, we speak of best value “contractors”, not “agents”.

Question: Can the individual COR information be placed on the Web?

Answer: We thought this had already been done, however, we will provide COR points of contact on the Web.

Performance Issues:

Ms. Coleman addressed all questions submitted by industry on the subject topic. She explained, if the contractor does not agree with a system generated violation, they should contact the COR at the PPSO.

HQMTMC will continue to provide the customer satisfaction score and customer survey information to the contractors.

Billing Issues:

Ms. Ann Peterson entertained a discussion regarding “original” documents when submitting bills to Parsifal. The contractors expressed difficulty in getting these documents from the drivers and the fear of original documents being lost in the mail.

MTMC Observation: Concerns about original documents being submitted were noted and we will consider modifying this requirement.

PTOPS Issues:

Before we started, Ms. Gibson asked that we all look at #32 on the handouts and in the answer area, to mark out the words from, “If delivery is recorded”.....to “reweigh information”.

By the end of September 1999, PTOPS software will be enhanced to end violations in situations such as short notice pickups, which preclude the contractor from doing pre-move surveys 3 days before pickup date.

A reminder will go out to all PPSOs to help contractors when they are called upon for assistance.

Question: Will HQMTMC continue to advise violations to contractors by report?

Answer: Yes, However, after November 1999, PTOPS will provide a way for contractors to view system generated violations.

Question: Will MTMC revise the requirement to enter delivery out of SIT information into PTOPS within 1 day after delivery?

Answer: No, not at this time.

CONTRACTING OFFICERS ISSUES:

Ms. Joyce McDonald provided her telephone number, e-mail address and fax number for any future contact with her office.

It was decided that the #34 in the handouts would be put on the Web.

Ms. Broz reminded the contractors that if they run into difficulties they should begin working the issue with Jim Whitmire, Primary COR at Southeast (SE) RSMO. They are there to provide a service to the contractors. Then, should they need further assistance, they can contact HQMTMC.

Question: What should we do about a fraudulent claim?

Answer: Contact the Contracting Officer at HQMTMC.

Question: When will MTMC decide on a change to requiring original documents?

Answer: Within 3 weeks.

Question: Is there any validation on the claims data?

Answer: Yes, MTMC is using random checks as well as asking the claims services to provide information.

DUE OUTS – Phyllis Broz

Ms. Broz summarized the issues she felt the contractors requested be addressed and reviewed them as follows:

1. Shipment volumes by channel on the Web
2. Allocation of traffic to small business on the Web
3. Identify small business set-aside channels
4. Show all performance scores with no names attached
5. Provide number of surveys for top 3 contractors
6. Look at ways to show scores by channel
7. Publish round robin process on Web
8. Claims information – system redesign so contractors don't need to fax their reports
9. Consider having Parsifal attend next meeting
10. Look at combining the score for customer satisfaction with the scores for origin and destination services from the customer survey to get an overall customer satisfaction score.
11. COR information will be placed on the web

12. Look at the requirement for “original” documents
13. Identify positive as well as negative comments from the customer survey.
14. PWC survey of contractors as part of our report to Congress
15. Provide MTMC evaluation plan on the Web
16. Establish milestones to provide correspondence replies more timely to contractors.
17. Jim Whitmire’s address to be placed on the WEB

Per Ms. Broz, PTOPS does not use DTOD. The pilot program uses the HHG Carriers’ Bureau Mileage Guide (Mile Maker is the automated version).

The question was asked if contractors would like more PTOPS training and no responses were received. However, one contractor said he felt training in conjunction with the destination PPSO training would be good.

The report to Congress is due the end of November and we will be asking for contractor input.

We are ready to release information to GAO and this information will be provided on the Web.

The contractors feel these meetings are valuable and would like to continue having them. We may have the next meeting after January 2000.

In closing, Ms. Broz requested 3 weeks to provide information to contractors on due-outs.

INDUSTRY ISSUES

Business Rules/PPSO/General Issues

1. What criteria are origin Contracting Officers using to select the best value agents. Is this procedure consistent at all bases?

Shipment distribution. What shipment distribution method should Transportation Offices now be following? What is MTMC's guidance? Our information indicates that there is no consistency between Transportation Offices when distributing shipments.

Answer: The Contracting Officer is not at the PPSO and is the only person that can make changes to the contract. The ordering officer is the correct person at the PPSO to select contractors for shipment offerings, but does not select "agents" under the pilot program. The ordering officer selects only "best value contractors" under the pilot program. A notice was placed on the MTMC home page dated 18 Jun 99 advising PPSOs that performance data was available in PTOPS and that the contractors guaranteed minimums were met, therefore, PPSOs could offer shipments using the five performance standard percentage elements (customer satisfaction, on-time pickup, on-time delivery, claims frequency, and claims dollar average) to determine who the best value contractors are. MTMC also placed a notice on the MTMC homepage on 11 Aug 99, reminding all PPSOs to utilize only those contractors providing "quality service and quality moves." Indication is that PPSOs are following best value acquisition procedures.

2. Are contractors who have not billed any shipments or only a few shipments, and have a score of 100 as a result, being favored as a best value contractor?

Why are performance scores based on so small a sample of shipments, i.e. 6 percent of shipments booked? Do you think this is fair and a true indicator of overall performance?

Answer: First of all, contractors who have not submitted invoices do not have a score of 100. These particular contractors do not have any score at all and we have been informed by some PPSOs that they are not using the contractors because they do not have any performance information by which to determine the contractors level of quality. Second, the contractors that have only a few surveys and have a score of 100 may be receiving shipments, but as stated above, PPSOs are offering shipments to those contractors providing the best overall service to the Government regardless of the number of shipments surveyed. Third, we have modified our survey procedures so that the survey is conducted based on PTOPS delivered shipment data rather than receipt of the invoice. The BCCA is now performing the survey based on shipment delivery and they have been instructed to perform

surveys on the contractors with no performance data first and then to perform surveys on contractors with only a few surveys.

3. If we encounter a member who becomes abusive or inappropriate what is the proper course of action?

Answer: The PWS provides guidance regarding the proper course of action for a few specific situations. We would recommend as a general rule of thumb to first go to the appropriate PPSO Contracting Officer Representative (if situation occurs at origin, go to the origin PPSO, if situation occurs at destination, go to the destination PPSO). If the situation cannot be resolved at the COR level, it should be elevated to the ACO and then to the PCO.

4. Please clarify the policy on separations. It is our understanding if the member has elected to move a distance further than their entitlement, or the weight of the shipment exceeds their weight allowance that the shipment should go to storage at origin to determine and collect excess costs. How do we know for sure when it must go to sit at origin and how are we notified that it is released for onward movement?

Answer: The policy on collection of excess costs varies from service to service, therefore, the rule regarding SIT at origin is as follows:

-If the PPSO authorizes SIT at origin, put the shipment into SIT at origin. Do not take it to destination. Once the PPSO collects the excess costs from the member, the PPSO should notify you to release the shipment for onward movement to destination. At that time you should contact the member and determine their needs.

-If you request a shipment to be placed into SIT at origin, the PPSO must authorize it and then it is your responsibility to work with the member to determine when it should be released for onward movement to destination.

5. Origin transportation offices are advising the member that the contractors will counsel the member within 48 hours of acceptance of the order. It doesn't make sense if the shipment is not loading within 30 days to counsel the member and then turn around within 7 days of load and redo the counseling. Eglin AFB.

We contacted Eglin AFB and discussed this concern with them. They were informing their service members that the contractor would be in touch with them within 48 hours after acceptance of a shipment. They now understand that is not a requirement and will inform their service members that the contractor should be in contact with them no later than 3 days prior to pickup. This does not mean that contractors should wait until the very last minute to make contact with the service members. Many service members would like to know that the shipment has been given to a contractor and who the contractor is. They will contact the PPSO if the contractor does not contact them.

6. Various PPSO representatives are extremely hard to get in contact with. There are some offices that are called and either the line will be busy for days or no one will answer the phone. (We did not keep a list of specific offices or contact names we deal with a great deal of them.) This is an overall issue when trying to communicate.

Answer: We have not experienced this problem and cannot assist you if we do not know where the problem is occurring. In the future when you cannot reach a specific PPSO, please notify the ACO located at the Southeast RSMO and they will attempt to resolve the problem at that time.

7. Destination Installation personnel continue to struggle with the procedures of the Pilot Program. Very few know the program and worse yet, know how to operate PTOPS. Base personnel continue to clear Pilot Program shipments for delivery. They also look to the contractor to literally provide training to them on this program because they aren't getting it from the military. What is being done to correct this?

Answer: We are aware that many destination PPSOs are under the impression that they are not participating in the pilot, however, when we are notified of a problem with a destination PPSO, we contact them and explain what their role is and assist them in getting online with PTOPS. We have also scheduled additional training for destination PPSOs in the October timeframe. We have stressed the importance of this training and hope this will help with the situation you are experiencing. However, we have heard a similar complaint from our origin PPSOs regarding the lack of training for contractor's agents/subcontractors. Many PPSOs are telling us that you are not training your agents/subcontractors and it is taking up a lot of their time to explain the pilot rules. As far as PPSOs still clearing shipments, someone must have contacted them in order for them to know there was a shipment to clear. Therefore, we would ask that you inform your agents/subcontractors when a shipment is moving under the pilot and provide them with the appropriate information.

8. Use of DOD approved warehouses. Why are some Transportation Offices requiring the use of DOD approved warehouses for storage of Pilot Program shipments when this is clearly not required by the contract? Patrick AFB, FL is any example.

Answer: There is no formal process of Government approval or inspection of facilities utilized by contractors in the Pilot. However, para 4.1 Contractor Furnished Property and Services, does require that facilities do not expose personal property to probable deterioration or damage. When COR or ACO personnel become aware of use or potential use of storage facilities with obvious protection problems the contractor(s) will be notified to either correct the problem immediately or transfer the shipments to an acceptable facility.

Performance Issues

9. What is the average customer satisfaction rating for July?

Answer: The customer satisfaction average score is 82%.

10. Also identify the number of contractors within each 10=point bracket. Example: there are 5 contractors from 90-100%. This would give the contractors a benchmark against each other.

Answer: As of 20 Aug 99, we have 3 contractors that have met or exceeded the standard for customer satisfaction. However, the ordering officer for task order award considers all performance elements.

11. Establish an appeal process for contractors on customer surveys.

Answer: There is no set appeal process. The independent auditor's customer survey will remain as the final word. Contractor's who can show a blatant discrepancy in the survey using documentation in their possession and the shipment history on the task order can submit support documents to MTMC for further investigation. We stated at the last meeting, that the results of the surveys are not up for discussion.

12. Dissemination to PTOPS Contractors of performance scores of all participants, or at least comparative ranking.

Answer: Contractors scores are contract sensitive and are between the contractor and the government.

13. Please discuss the quarterly performance evaluation procedure and its applicability on future bookings. Will changes be made to a contractor's quarterly performance score based upon the contractor's response submitted to MTMC?

Answer: The performance scores are cumulative monthly. This change was provided by modification of the pilot contracts. These scores are provided to PPSOs on a monthly basis. Performance scores may be changed only if the contractor provides indisputable documentation/proof that supports a change.

14. Contractor Status Report: during peak season we have accepted a number of shipments that have shown being refused by other contractors prior to our acceptance. We know that some of these contractors have not met their CDCs. We are concerned that by accepting these moves during peak season we may have a service failure that would jeopardize future shipment awards while the contractor that refused the difficult shipment will be rewarded with tonnage in the off season. What is the penalty for shipment refusals prior to meeting your CDC?

Answer: The penalty for refusal of shipments prior to meeting your CDC, like most contract noncompliance's, depending on the severity could lead to nonuse or even termination. If you have reached your CDC for a given day you are not required to accept further task order awards.

15. Contractor Status Report: One of the items reviewed under Attachment 1 is On-Time Delivery. We have two shipments that have been charged with as being late even though they were both delivered prior to the delivery date issued by the government on the original task order. The question presented to the customer is "was their shipment delivered by the agreed upon date". The only delivery date we are aware of is the one on the task order. Our contract is with the government and it is apparent we met the requirements set forth in our contract. Why are we being penalized for the future shipment awards when we clearly met our contract requirements?

Answer: We have investigated the contractor's concerns and have made the necessary changes.

16. Contractor Status Report: the results of Attachment 1 are viewed by the local COR and are used to make shipment awards. The contract violations in Attachment 2 are not the result of service related failures and appear to carry less weight because they are not considered in shipment awards. What are the penalties or consequences for violations in Attachment 2?

Answer: For clarification, the Contractor Officer Representative does not make "shipment awards," the PPSO ordering officer has this responsibility. Noncompliance with the contract can adversely effect shipment awards. Continued noncompliance may result in contractor's not receiving further task orders. PPSOs have access to contractor violations in PTOPS and may consider the violations when awarding shipments to the "best value" contractor.

17. As was stated in the first quarterly meeting, there is always going to be a percentage of customers who will not be happy no matter what you do. What is our recourse if a shipper says they would not use us again, resulting in a negative impact on our score, when all the requirements of the PWS were met?

Answer: This remains a customer satisfaction issue.

18. Is it possible for us to know our score as it changes? When Parsifal conducts their survey with the member does each evaluation impact our score as it is completed, or are all the results for a whole month compiled and reported in PTOPS at one time? How soon is the new score available to the origin ordering officers?

Answer: The scores are cumulative and are input into PTOPS once a month, on or about the 20th of the month. They are available to the PPSOs as soon as they are downloaded to PTOPS.

Billing Issues

19. Parsifal: the third party auditing company has made a number of determinations that we do not agree with. What is the proper procedure to protest these rulings?

Answer: If you wish to appeal a determination made by Parsifal, you should first follow the procedures provided by Parsifal on the Statement of Difference. After that, if you still disagree, you should appeal to a certifying officer at the Southeast RSMO.

20. The biggest problem faced by RMM, as third party service partner, is the requirement to provide original signed documents with our billing package. In this paper intensive industry, and the number of hands that the paperwork flows through, it is very difficult to receive original documents from our movers. Most times we get copies of the originals and then find ourselves spending many hours trying to obtain originals. This is delaying our billing process and creates many hours of lost productivity by our staff. It is not standard commercial practice to require original documents. I think MTMC needs to relax their standards on this issue in order for the contractors to provide better and more timely invoicing to the government.

Answer: This issue is under consideration at this time.

21. Parsifal continues to reconstruct weights even when certified weight tickets are provided with the billing. Why is this being done and where is it addressed in the PWS?

Answer: Parsifal Corporation's contract requires the performance of a thorough audit of all invoices, including weight. This audit process is a government requirement in the auditor's statement of work, and therefore is not addressed within the scope of the transportation contractors' PWS. Parsifal Corporation follows a rigorous procedure of thoroughly examining the provided documents, as well as contacting each service member and/or contractor as deemed necessary. Parsifal regularly seeks guidance from MTMC before proceeding on shipments where there may be a weight issue.

22. Why is Parsifal rejecting trailer weights? In many cases the scales are not long enough to accommodate the entire length of the tractor and trailer. Paragraph 5.3.6.4 of the PWS covers this issue. Your interpretation would be beneficial.

Answer: Parsifal has always honored axle weight tickets as legitimate when taken as a single draft (like CAT scale tickets). However, they have consistently and correctly disallowed axle weight tickets not done as a single draft. According to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), all 50 states currently use Handbook 44, Specifications, Tolerances and Other Technical Requirements for Weights and Measurement Devices, 1999, to determine the rules by which vehicles are weighed and the rules governing the way the weighmaster ascertains weights.

Consequently, "certified" scales in all 50 states adhere to the regulations in Handbook 44.

The pertinent section of Handbook 44 regarding axle weights reads:

U.R. 3.3. Single Draft Vehicle Weighing. A vehicle or a coupled vehicle combination shall be commercially weighed on a vehicle scale only as a single draft. That is, the total weight of such a vehicle or combination shall not be determined by adding together the results obtained by separately and not simultaneously weighing each end of such vehicle or individual elements of such coupled combination.

23. Please explain the procedure when documents required for billing are lost in the mail or Parsifal claims they did not receive them? Once we have mailed the originals to them we only have copies in our file. If Parsifal claims that the original SIT Certificate, Weight Certificate, signed Task Order or any other required document is missing we do not have an original anymore to send them. What should the contractor do?

Answer: If the required original documents are lost, the contractor should make a "good faith" attempt to get "true copies". That means the contractor should return to the original source, if possible, and ask the weighmaster, service member, warehouseman, etc. who signed the original document to certify that your copy is a "true" copy of what he/she signed. If that is not possible, MTMC and Parsifal will work together to assist the contractor in getting paid what he is due on a case by case basis. Contractors should, by now, have established a business process, which enables the contractor to efficiently obtain the necessary documents for billing.

24. If a shipment delivers to storage we are allowed to bill for transportation charges for services that have been completed. If we have already billed transportation charges based on the weight at origin, and a reweigh is performed, and the reweigh is less than the original weight, how do we correct our transportation costs already billed?

Answer: When the contractor submits his "final" invoice, he should correct any previous Clins submitted based on weight at origin and Parsifal will make the necessary adjustments.

25. Task Order signatures. Why are customer signatures on Task Order required when the customer has signed commercial documents reflecting the same information? This is also another additional administrative requirement. Also, the lack of ability to produce the Task Order as a multi-part form requires multiple original signatures from the customer.

Answer: The task order serves as the Government's receiving report and it must have a valid signature obtained whenever the contractor performs authorized services.

26. Confirmation of services in PTOPS. Why do we need to continue to enter and confirm services in PTOPS when our billing documents reflects the exact same

information signed for by the customer? This duplication of effort adds to the administrative burden imposed by the program.

Answer: The service member is signing for services authorized and performed so these services must be shown on the task order, either generated by PTOPS, or listed as authorized "pen and ink" changes/additions by the contractor. In order for Parsifal to properly audit, the signed task order and other required documents must be supported by the information that the contractor and the PPSO have entered and confirmed in PTOPS.

PTOPS Issues

27. Contractor Status Report: we have received a number of computer generated violations in Attachment 2 that are not our fault. Example, Contractor failed to provide pre-move survey within three days of pickup when shipment was tendered within two days of move. Will this violation be corrected within the software or should we be protesting each violation?

The only issue we would like to discuss are the computer generated violations noted in the last two reports. Many of them were in error, particularly those pertaining to our failure to provide pre-move survey information in a timely manner. In most cases, the shipments were booked on short notice without enough time to meet the requirement. Handling short notice shipments is very difficult, especially during period of peak demand but we have not refused any such shipments. Is it necessary for us to respond to all such violations in order to protect our standing in the program?

Situations that are out of contractor's control such as short notice moves that do not allow for the three days for premove information to be entered should be adjusted by either the PPSO when they offer shipments, or the contractor should be able to put in comments that would explain the system-generated violation. These comments should show on the report that is generated monthly.

PTOPS-system generated violations require your immediate review and adjustment. For example, short notice shipments are often offered only 1-2 days prior to the pick up date. This means the contractor is automatically tagged with a violation for not entering premove survey information at least 3 days prior to the scheduled pick up date. If this remains unchanged, then contractors and your office alike will be forced to respond to the same violations each and every month.

When we accept a short notice shipment that picks up in 3 days or less from the date it was offered we automatically incur a contract violation for not reporting the premove survey result within 3 days. What is the possibility of removing an automatic contract violation in this situation?

Short Notice Shipment Issues. What can be done to fix problems created by Short Notice Shipments, i.e. less than 3 days notice? The contract reporting requirements automatically create contract violations when Short Notice Shipments are tendered to contractors. PTOPS programming, which reflects contract reporting requirements, continues to generate automatic contract violation records for Short Notice Shipments. This results in additional administrative workload for MTMC and Contractor staffs in responding to these violation situations that have nothing to do with quality of services provided.

PTOPS Violations. Why are we penalized for failing to meet the requirement to provide pre-move survey results at least 3 days prior to load when the member refuses to be available until 2 or 3 days prior to load? Can Contractors have access to PTOPS to enter comments and explanations into PTOPS to clarify these situations rather than relying on the formal Monthly Quality Report process?

Answer: The contractor should keep record of the violations they feel are unjust and bring them to the attention of the PPSO Contracting Officer Representative who will research each one and make a decision on whether or not to remove the violation. If a dispute cannot be resolved that the PPSO level, contractors should elevate the issue to the ACO at the Southeast RSMO.

28. We recommend giving the contractor the ability to view system-generated violations that may occur when required data input timeframes into PTOPS have not been met. This would aid in performance evaluations and contractor awareness. It also would allow the contractors to put corrective measures in place before a thirty-day period has expired.

Answer: The PTOPS application will be modified to allow contractors access to their own performance statistics.

29. On the last 6-month review the system added the weekend as workdays, which in turn, caused violations if part of the 3 or 5 day reporting period fell on the weekend.

Answer: PTOPS was designed not to include weekend days when computing automation contract violations. If there are specific examples of when a weekend date was included in an automatic violation, please provide specific information to the PTOPS Help Desk so the code can be reviewed to determine if a mistake was made. Additionally, to remove a violation due to software error, follow the procedures provided in the answer to question 27.

30. Corrections to PTOPS information. We continue to have difficulty with some installations, usually destination, when corrections to information in PTOPS need to be made. Many personnel state that they don't know how to make them and don't want to take the time to make them. Unfortunately, contractors can't make the corrections, only Transportation Office personnel can.

Answer: We know that some destination PPSOs are not actively participating in the pilot and do not want to make corrections for contractors. However, there are times when the destination cannot make the corrections and there are times when a correction cannot be made at all. There have been some instances where contractors are asking PPSOs to make corrections when they are unable to do so. We have asked our software contractor to develop a list of "types of corrections," along with shipment status codes and who is able to make the correction. This list will be posted to the MTMC home page and should alleviate some of the confusion.

31. What is MTMC going to do about severe communications/access problems to PTOPS encountered recently due to outages at "ATM" in Norfolk? Likewise, we have been advised by the PTOPS helpdesk that one of the problems is that MTMC's line (T1 circuit) to the server at MTMC is constantly saturated and it makes access to PTOPS either interminably slow or impossible. What will be done so that there will not be constant contractor violations?

PTOPS performance. We continue to experience difficulties getting into PTOPS. Sometimes we spend 30 – 40 minutes each day just trying to get into PTOPS. PTOPS responsiveness continues to be slow creating much wasted time given all of the service reporting requirements for each shipment as specified the contract. Is the system reliability being looked at? What is the status of server upgrades? To help ease some of the burden, will you revise the requirement to enter delivery out of SIT information into PTOPS from 1 day after delivery to 5 days after delivery?

Answer: MTMC has received permission to move the PTOPS application and other MTMC web-based systems out of the Military NIPRNET environment. They will establish

a government address for all web-based systems. This will eliminate the "ATM" failures that all contractors have experienced. MTMC is procuring the hardware and software required to support this move and will be testing the new server for the next couple of weeks. The anticipated switch over date is sometime in Oct. MTMC's T1 circuit connection is in the process of procuring additional capability. Plans call for a new T1 line to be in place by the end of Sep or the first of Oct. The new government server will have a separate T1 connection. We have done analysis on PTOPS server and it not close to maximum potential. PTOPS averages only 11,000 hits a day. We have experienced only two occasions where the PTOPS application has been down for extended period of time. Once in Mar after a power failure at MTMC, and the second time in Sep when we discovered a problem with a new delivery of software. All other connection problems can be traced to an Internet/NIPRNET failure or saturation of the MTMC T1 circuit.

32. Have any changes been made to speed up the PTOPS software applications? Have any software changes been made which allow out of sequence input data entry or to correct input errors that are out of sequence? For example, reweigh is performed but wrong date is entered into PTOPS or delivery was entered before the reweigh date was entered into PTOPS.

If a reweigh is required, the reweigh weight must be reported in PTOPS prior to reporting delivery of the shipment. Can the program be revised to make it impossible for us to report delivery without having already reported the reweigh? This would prevent any contract violations of this nature.

Answer: There have been no changes made to the PTOPS application to enter data out of sequence. There is one request to modify PTOPS to provide a warning for all shipments that have an outstanding reweigh request. The warning would remind the contractor to record the reweigh information before recording delivery. If delivery is recorded prior to entering the reweigh information, either the origin or destination PPSO can add the reweigh information. MTMC will be conducting seven additional training sessions for destination PPSOs in October and November. One of the topics to be stressed is what type of data change requests to expect from contractors and how to accomplish each change. An information package is also being made for distribution to all PPSOs explaining what information can be changed, how to accomplish the change, and in what status the shipment can be in to change that data.

Contracting Officer Issues

33. Communication – The initial evaluations responded to months ago remain unanswered. Many contractors appealed scores and explained circumstances such as system generated violations. Yet, to date, we have received no response. This obviously means that contractor and Pilot Program personnel alike will have to respond to the same violations each and every month. Not only will the delay in review cause unnecessary loss of tonnage for the contractor but, it certainly does not give the appearance that communicating with the contractors is a priority. E-mails, telephone calls and letters go unanswered. Why? This is especially difficult to understand considering the very strict requirements being placed on the contractors. Isn't it only fair to expect responses from the contracting office?

Answer: The contracting office was inundated with responses to violations and is still processing a few outstanding letters. These are not boilerplate actions. Every violation and/or concern must be researched and addressed individually for each contractor. The Contracting Office response includes coordination with the Operations Branch and the Judge Advocate Office, all of which takes time especially when there are 41 separate actions. Contractors are not requested or required to respond to violations each month, this is still a quarterly function due upon request from the Contracting Officer.

34. Untimely performance results and reporting – I've mentioned this previously. Reporting and/or information distribution must be accomplished in a timely manner. Contractors are unable to review the information if it is not available. Many contractors may also be missing out on valuable tonnage because only a handful of shipments have

been evaluated. Yes, I know that many have not billed shipments or billed them correctly. This however is not the case with our company. Also, our placement with relation to other scores is important to know. It allows us to anticipate tonnage levels and advise our vendors and internal personnel accordingly. We can then prepare for increases and arrange for additional capacity, etc.

Answer: We are reevaluating our current process so that we can provide performance information in a more timely manner. The BCCA is now able to access PTOPS to obtain the dates shipments have been delivered; it is no longer necessary for them to wait for an invoice. Performance scores are cumulative and available monthly (on or about the 20th) to the contractors through the PPSO prior to receipt of a Status report. Whether you have one or one hundred shipments, your scores are based on how well you perform. If you are in the higher percentages, you can assume you will be getting more shipments than those contractors with lower scores. Your percentage in relationship to other contractors is a matter of privacy much like your prices or committed daily capacity.

35. Why does it take so long to receive a reply to a contractor's response to the quarterly performance report? If changes to the performance score are applicable based upon the contractor's response, the long delay in evaluation hurts the contractor in the awarding shipments.

Answer: As stated previously, performance scores are available on a monthly basis. These can be requested from the PPSO prior to receiving the hard copy from MTMC. Response to violations does not effect awarding of shipments. Customer satisfaction and on time pickup and delivery and claims information determine shipment awards to best value contractors.